

## *A Blueprint For The Uniform Civil Code*

### **Universal Bill of Rights for the Indian Citizen**

We the people, whose attitudes and aspirations are shaped by the Constitution, recognising that there are shortcomings in laws, adopt this Universal Bill of Rights for the Indian Citizen, as under:

#### *Clause 1*

The fundamental right to education shall be compulsorily available to the citizen till the age of 18. Education shall not mean religious education imparted through institutions of theological nature. A child's fundamental right to education shall override all other fundamental rights, except right to life and personal liberty under Article 21 of the Constitution.

#### *Clause 2*

The fundamental right to religion and beliefs shall be available only to the individual, not to communities and organisations. In disputes involving an individual's rights, the state or courts shall generally not accept interventions from organisations and groups of religious nature.

#### *Clause 3*

Individuals, irrespective of gender, may marry under religious practices but after marriage, disputes involving divorce, joint property, child custody and alimony shall be decided under one law which shall override personal laws. No one can remarry before divorce obtained through a court. Parallel courts run by religious groups shall be deemed a criminal offence.

#### *Clause 4*

Parliament, state legislatures and courts shall not make laws or issue orders based on religious scriptures of any community, in keeping with the secular nature of the republic. The Constitution itself shall be the source for such orders and for further legislative improvements.

#### *Clause 5*

Citizens – irrespective of gender, religious persuasion or sexual orientation – shall a) inherit equal share in the ancestral/parental property, b) shall have equal right to adoption and will not bring up the adopted child as per their religious beliefs, and c) shall have equal right to succession. No tax benefits shall accrue to the individuals or groups for the reasons of religious and other identities.

#### *Clause 6*

The citizen shall have unhindered freedom of thought and speech, which cannot be curtailed by the state for any reason, except when there is imminent danger to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of India. The state shall not impose restrictions on books, magazines, movies, newspapers and the like with retrospective effect from January 26, 1950.

### ***Clause 7***

Rule of law shall apply equally to every citizen. Government officials using the laws selectively under political or other consideration against some individuals, and not against others, within their jurisdiction shall cease to hold their position from the time such an omission or commission occurs.

### ***Clause 8***

No citizen can be held in custody for more than 24 hours, and rarely to a maximum 90 days in serious cases such as terrorism and sedition, without being chargesheeted before a court of law.

### ***Clause 9***

The state, through the Election Commission, shall ensure organisational and financial transparency of political parties. Political parties can accept donations only through verifiable, recorded and cashless means of financial transaction. Elections of political parties shall be organised by the Election Commission. Violations shall make them liable to be de-recognized.

### ***Clause 10***

A citizen shall be permitted to buy, sell or transfer land throughout the territory of India. Any existing laws that contravene this provision shall be deemed null and void.

### ***Clause 11***

All children born throughout the territory of India including Gilgit Baltistan, which being the part of Jammu & Kashmir, shall have an automatic right to be the citizen of India.

### ***Clause 12***

Use of words that describe individuals or groups of people in a discriminatory and hateful manner (examples thereof being bhangi, chamar, kafir, munafiq and the like) shall be a criminal offence. Such words could be of religious, caste, regional, gender or other demeaning connotation. It shall be dealt with by one law.

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We appeal to the members of Parliament to enact this Bill as Law in fulfilment of the objectives set out in the Preamble of the Constitution and in particular Article 44 which says: "The State shall endeavour to secure for the citizens a uniform civil code throughout the territory of India."

Signatories

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